Legislative Assembly

Friday, 3rd December, 1954.

CONTENTS.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

As to Swimming Classes.

Mr. BRADY: asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What number of children from State schools in the metropolitan area, east of Bayswater, are attending swimming classes during the current summer?

(2) Where are the classes being held?

(3) Why are no swimming classes conducted at Guildford?

(4) Is the Education Department co-operating with the Medical and Public Works Departments with a view to removing any pollution in the river, which precludes swimming classes in the upper reaches of the river?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Seven hundred and twenty-two. Four hundred and thirty-eight from the metropolitan area go to Como, and 284 from the hills district to Lake Leschenaultia.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) Condemnation by the Commissioner of Public Health of the Swan River above the Causeway for school swimming classes.

(4) No. It is not the function of the Education Department to carry out work of this nature. The department takes the advice of the Public Health and the Public Works Departments as to whether a place is suitable or not for the conducting of swimming classes.

GRAPES.

As to Export, Marketing, etc.

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What are the prospects of quitting the whole of the export grape crop from this State in the coming season?

(2) Does the Department of Agriculture insist on export grapes from this State being packed in granulated cork?

(3) Is he aware that this method of packing grapes is very expensive and has long since been dispensed with by most other grape exporting centres throughout the world?

(4) Is he aware that cork packing is not appreciated by the merchants at out-turn markets because of the space taken up by this form of packing?

(5) Have the export grape growers been advised of the methods of packing as indicated in the Department of Agriculture File No. 90/49, volumes 8 and 9, laid upon the Table of the House on the 13th July last, entitled "Export of Fruit Overseas. Report of Shipments—Ports of Arrival"?

(6) Have the possibilities of establishing additional markets along the route of the Knutsen shipping line been fully examined by the Department of Agriculture?

(7) If the answer to No. (6) is in the negative, would he make immediate representation to the Commonwealth Government Trade Commissioner in the Far East to ascertain the possibility of additional markets for grapes from this State?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is not possible at this stage accurately to assess the potential of the overseas grape market for the coming season, but conditions do not appear unfavourable.

Last season, although difficulty was experienced in disposing of grapes early in the season, the market closed on a favourable note and all available grapes were shipped.

(2) The Exports (Fresh Fruit) Regulations administered on behalf of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture require that all export grapes shall be packed in granulated cork. Experimental work on alternative packs was commenced by the Department of Agriculture last season and will be continued next year. Until a suitable substitute is found, cork packing material will be insisted upon.

(3) It is recognised that cork packaging has become expensive; hence the experiments referred to in No. (2) above. However, this method is still in use by such countries as Spain and Portugal. Some countries such as South Africa have never developed this method, but the method of packaging adopted must suit the requirements of the particular market.

(4) The consensus of opinion among exporters is that cork packaged grapes are preferred by importers from Western Australia. Recent experimental shipments to Singapore by the C.S.I.R.O. from New South Wales showed that cork was preferred to various experimental types of sawdust packs. The space occupied by the packing material is approximately the same irrespective of the material used.

(5) Investigations into the use of alternative methods of packaging are in progress but until these are completed, no recommendations can be made to growers.

(6) The possibilities of additional markets along the route of the Knutsen Shipping Line are appreciated by the department and by commercial interests. There are certain aspects additional to marketing, such as availability of refrigerated shipping space, which will be better known nearer to the commencement of the export season. These have a bearing on the matter and the possibilities are being watched with interest.

(7) The suggested action is not considered warranted at this stage.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

As to Perth City Council Revenue and Rating.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is he aware that the City of Perth brought forward £88,422 in the General Revenue Account on the 1st November, 1953?

(2) Is he aware that this had accumulated to £144,030 by the 31st October, 1954?

(3) Does not this indicate that a reduction of 20 per cent. in the general rate should have been made for the year 1953-54 to comply with the Act?

(4) Is not the intention of the Act that there should be little in the way of carry forward at any time?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) No. Rates are levied to provide the difference between the estimated expenditure and the estimated receipts from sources other than rates. The council has complied with the Act in this matter except that the budget provided for a surplus of £47,400. This is equal to 10 per cent. of rates levied and rates could have been reduced by that amount.

Excess of revenue over estimates with expenditure less than revenue plus the budget surplus accounts for the credit balance at the 31st October, 1954.

(4) Yes.

RAILWAYS.

As to Use of Delicensed Hotel Building, Midland Junction.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Has the old delicensed Victoria Hotel at Midland Junction been sold?

(2) If not, could consideration be given to converting the building for Public Works Department purposes, in order to cater for activities of water supply, sewerage, main roads, State electricity and other Government instrumentalities, rapidly expanding in the eastern suburbs?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Inquiries have been made and the building is not required for governmental or semi-governmental purposes.

TRAFFIC.

As to Lights, Great Eastern Highway-Helena-st. Corner.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Will he consider placing traffic lights on the corner of Great Eastern Highway and Helena-st., Midland Junction, to facilitate and ensure greater safety in traffic movement, particularly at peak periods?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

The Government has appointed a special committee to investigate and recommend priority of intersections for the installation of traffic lights. The suggestion of the member for Guildford-Midland will be referred to that committee.

HOSPITALS.

As to Improvements to Buildings, Harvey.

Mr. MANNING asked the Minister for Health:

(1) What improvements are planned for the Harvey district hospital this financial year?

(2) When will the improvements be put in hand?

(3) When are the plans to erect new nurses' quarters at the Harvey hospital to be proceeded with?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Health) replied:

(1) None at present.

(2) Answered by No. (1)

(3) When practicable.

HOUSING.

As to Negotiations for Land, Harvey.

Mr. MANNING asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What is the location and area of the Crown land which the State Housing Commission is negotiating to obtain at Harvey?

(2) Is the land at present occupied? If so—

(a) By whom;

(b) what area do they occupy;

(c) for what purpose do they use the land?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The area is located immediately east of the South-Western Highway in the vicinity of the cemetery and includes Reserves 16030 and 17805.

(2) The area is Crown land and application has been made to the Lands Department to set aside 30 building blocks in the subdivision being made by that department.

COASTAL EROSION.

As to Departmental Investigation.

Mr. HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it intended that the Public Works Department investigate erosion in the near future on certain sections of the Western Australian coast?

(2) If so, when is it proposed that these investigations should commence?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Investigations have already commenced.

(a) Foreshore information of past conditions over many years, such as surveys, air photographs, etc., is being collected and collated.

(b) Arrangements have been made, in conjunction with the university, for a model analysis to be made of a particular section of foreshore.

This particular investigation will extend over a period of about 12 months.

WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) As to Barbalin Reservoir, Supply and Consumption.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

What was—

(a) the maximum weekly consumption of water from Barbalin Reservoir;

(b) the average weekly summer consumption;

(c) the maximum weekly intake from the G.W.S. last summer?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) Maximum weekly pumping from Barbalin Reservoir 1953-1954 summer—1,700,000 gallons.

(b) 1,570,000 gallons.

(c) 1,500,000 gallons.

(b) As to Completion of Pipeline, Wellington Dam-Narrogin.

Hon. V. DONEY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Will he give me a reply to the question submitted to him by me during my contribution to the Water Supplies Estimates, such question being: "Will he use every endeavour to complete in 1955 the 36 miles of 2ft. 6in. pipelaying work still outstanding as between Narrogin and Wellington Dam?"

(2) Does he recall my assertion that the department's Chief Engineer, Mr. Dumas (now retired) implied in 1947 that the laying of as much as 46 miles of such work in one year was a reasonable expectation, and that 36 miles should therefore be a comfortable proposition?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is anticipated that on the 21st December, 1954, a distance of 29 miles of the Wellington Dam-Narrogin pipeline will remain outstanding. The pressing demands in other areas make it impracticable to complete the pipeline in the calendar year 1955, but every endeavour will be made to complete in the calendar year 1956.

It is expected that 13½ miles will be laid this financial year, which compares favourably with our average of 9 miles annually since the commencement of the project.

(2) In the absence of pressing demands elsewhere, the laying of 36 miles of pipeline in one year would be reasonable.

(c) As to Booster Pump, Barbalin-Waddouring Dam Link.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Has the booster pump on the Barbalin-Waddouring link broken down?

(2) If so, how long has the pump been out of action and when is it expected that it will be functioning again?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Since the 23rd November. It is expected that this booster will be operating by the 10th December.

(d) As to Improving Service by Goldfields Scheme.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Over what period will be spread the £30,000 which it is proposed to spend on improving water supplies service by the Goldfields scheme?

(2) Can he give further details of the work proposed to be carried out with this money in addition to the proposed improvements to the North Bodallin and North Walgoolan extensions?

(3) Will he give consideration to installing, from this money, new engines and pumping equipment at the Barbalin reservior?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) By the 30th June, 1955.

	£
(2) Goomalling extension	8,000
Toodyay extension	3,000
Wundowie extension	3,800
Westonia extension	4,000
South Walgoolan extension	4,000

(3) It is the department's opinion that replacement of the existing plant is not justified at present.

(e) As to Inspection of Barbalin Reservoir Plant.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What is the date of the latest report of the Inspector of Pumping Equipment in respect of the engine and pumps at Barbalin reservoir?

(2) Has he perused that report?

(3) Is he satisfied from the report that the engine and pumps are in good condition and that a period of trouble-free pumping during the ensuing summer months may be reasonably anticipated?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The 30th November, 1954.

(2) No.

(3) It is the department's opinion that the existing plant will fulfil the pumping requirements during the ensuing summer.

WAGON TIMBER CONSTRUCTION CO.

As to State Saw Mills Partnership.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) In what proportion is the State Saw Mills a partner in Wagon Timber Construction Co.?

(2) What amount of profit from the company is due to the State Saw Mills for the year to the 30th June, 1954?

(3) What current contracts of the company are for goods whose final destination is the Railway Department?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 30 per cent.

(2) State Saw Mills is a trading concern and I am not prepared to disclose for general information profit arising from any particular section of activities. The hon. member is referred to the answer to his earlier question on the 2nd December, 1954, relating to profits of the partnership.

(3) There is a small outstanding balance only of contracts for supply of fabricated timber bodies for "FD" wagons and "GF" wagons, completion of which is expected this month.

CEMENT.

As to Importations and Supply Position.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) With reference to the answers given to my question of the 9th November, 1954, has the inquiry into the cement supply position been completed?

(2) If so, what is the position disclosed, and will adequate supplies from local or imported sources be available in the New Year?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. A further meeting is being held next week.

(2) Supply position at present is reported to be satisfactory and the question of further importations will be discussed at this meeting.

HARBOURS.

As to Deterioration of Port Finance.

Mr. HILL asked the Treasurer:

(1) Has he noticed the following figures in the financial statements for 1952-53 and 1953-54—

Harbours and Rivers.

Fremantle Harbour Trust—1952-53, surplus, £51,380; 1953-54, £91,804

Fremantle, Other—1952-53, surplus, £22,354; 1953-54, deficiency, £28,699.

Bunbury Harbour Trust—1952-53, deficiency, £78,029; 1953-54, deficiency, £84,073.

Bunbury, Other—£1952-53, deficiency, £12,598; 1953-54, deficiency, £51,085.

Geraldton — 1952-53, deficiency, £27,501; 1953-54, deficiency, £30,356.

Albany—1952-53, deficiency, £51,493; 1953-54, deficiency, £46,555.

Total, all items under Harbours and Rivers — 1952-53, Deficiency £248,440; 1953-54, deficiency, £444,577.

(2) Has the Government any proposal to check this progressive deterioration of port finance?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Proposals will probably be developed during the early part of next year.

FISHERIES.

As to Opening of River Bar Mandurah.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Could he indicate whether he is able to meet the request of approximately 90 fishermen in the Mandurah district that an opening should be made to the river bar to enable fish to enter Peel Inlet?

(2) If it is intended to carry out work on the bar, when will work commence, and what will be the nature of the work?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is not possible to meet the request for a dredge to be used at Mandurah as the department's equipment is not suitable for work in those exposed conditions.

(2) It is considered impracticable to attempt the work of opening up the bar under existing conditions, when there is no river flow to help to maintain and keep open a cut, as sand accretion in summer months would rapidly block up a small channel.

Consideration will be given to possible measures for opening up the sand bar when suitable conditions develop next winter.

BILL—PARKS AND RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st December.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [2.30]: I view the Bill with very mixed feelings. I appreciate the desire of its sponsor to provide facilities for the licensing of canteens in areas where there is exploration for oil or mining for petroleum, as stated in the Bill. I suppose he and those who have discussed the matter with him have had representations made to them by the companies concerned in the exploration for oil for the provision of canteens.

In this regard I think the Bill is somewhat loosely drawn. If we are to agree to the principle of providing canteens or permitting the Licensing Court to authorise the granting of licences not only in the areas of the Murchison, the Kimberleys and so forth as specifically referred to in the Bill, but also in any other area that the Licensing Court may deem fit—which is also provided in the Bill—we shall probably find that exploration for oil will be undertaken in various parts of the State other than those north of the 26th parallel.

Quite likely it will be found that applications will be made for the establishment of canteens in those districts as well. Some of the districts will be comparatively close —in some cases at least—to settlement. Then we come to that part of the Bill which says that the privileges of the canteen licence are to extend not only to those employed by the company holding the licence and also to those persons who are temporarily living in the district and to bona fide travellers.

Whilst in the northern areas, where the search for oil is in progress, there is not likely to be any abuse on a large scale, I suggest that if licences are granted in other areas of the State—as the Bill will permit—in all probability it will be found that a great number of people other than the employees of the company, bona fide travellers and the temporary residents—the last two, of course, providing the difficulty—would be served at the canteen.

Another feature that occurs to me is this: What are the trading hours of these canteens to be? As far as I am able to assume from the proposition contained in the Bill, the hours are to be the same as those for licensed premises, wayside hotels, etc. That means from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. As I understand it, there is an obligation on those licensees—I can be corrected if I am wrong—to keep their premises open during the hours that trading is permitted, namely, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The Bill is entirely silent on that aspect, yet I assume that it is not the intention of the sponsor of the Bill that a place granted a canteen licence should be kept open during all the normal hours when hotels are open

for business. The position is a little more difficult, I find, because there are places in different areas—which are mentioned in the Bill—when the hours have already been extended by the Licensing Court.

So, as I say, if the company holding the licence is, by the requirement of the Act, compelled to keep premises open during the same hours that are observed by a hotel, then I think the company is going to find a problem on its hands. I submit those two or three problems, which are put in good faith, to the member for Murchison for his consideration because if one is to subscribe to the point of view that a canteen licence is desirable in the circumstances that the Bill implies—although it does not say—then one has to be pretty careful how one handles the position.

The second major proposal in the measure is that there shall be the right to serve liquor with meals between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. provided that a full meal is served costing the same as any other meal that is provided on the premises. Knowing Western Australia fairly well and how completely difficult it is to obtain a meal of any sort in 99¾ per cent. of the places in Western Australia after 7.30 p.m., it seems to me that either this proposal is being inserted in the Bill for the benefit of one or two concerns that are going to do some special trading if they can manage it or, alternatively, the proposal is so much eyewash and is simply meant to open the gate for illicit trading after 9 p.m.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Do not you think that there will be more of those places that will extend their hours?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: No, I do not think there will be. In Western Australia the number will be extremely limited because there will be the greatest difficulty, in the majority of cases, in securing staff; and I do not blame them, either, for not serving meals after 9 p.m. I must admit that I do object to being prevented from being served with a meal at 6.45 p.m. or thereabout, but I think there is a reasonable limit. I certainly do not feel, at this stage of the proceedings, that I can agree with the reference to night starvation which the hon. member made when he introduced the Bill.

Mr. Hutchinson: The point is that they are either hungry or thirsty.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Their hunger should be satisfied, I should say, before 9 p.m.; possibly before that time. There is another proposition in the Bill which must have been incorporated for the benefit of the few, but which may have some justification. That proposal is that premises—such as Yanchep, for example—which claims some tourist attraction, can be permitted by the Licensing Court to have additional trading opportunities.

But I notice that there is a reference to the metropolitan area and that these concessions are to be allowed outside the metropolitan area. However, that will not do. The Licensing Act is silent as to what the metropolitan area is. In fact, while there are two or three areas known to the Local Government Department, as being metropolitan, there is only one that is well defined and I understand that that is described in the Traffic Act, 1919-1953.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: What about the Electoral Act?

The Premier: What about the Traffic Act?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Whichever way one likes to cover it, there is nothing in the Licensing Act about what is the metropolitan area and there must be a definition of that area. If it is to be there at all, I suggest it should be the one that is referred to under the Traffic Act to which we are well accustomed and which is neatly defined. That is the one I would stick to. So it is quite obvious to me that if the House is to accept this measure, it can only do so with two or three important amendments. Personally, I do not care to deal with the licensing legislation piecemeal as we have been doing in the last couple of years, partly owing to the efforts of the member for Murchison who produced, I think, a measure last year which ultimately obtained the blessing of both Houses.

The Premier: That was the fracteur headache Bill.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: That is the one; this is the night starvation Bill. I feel that if we are to tackle these problems we should have a real good go at the whole business, because if there are to be little bits put on here and chipped off there and if, in the opinion of the House, these matters require attention, from time to time, it is obvious that the present legislation leaves much to be desired. I do not think we should encourage anything that will make it easier to obtain liquor at all hours of the day and night. It seems easy enough already to the majority of people.

I concede, however that in such places as petroleum areas there might be some justification for a carefully handled licence to prevent, perhaps, worse practices arising by other means. But I feel, except for that paragraph in the Bill, that the measure is undesirable. I just do not like the balance of the provisions in it to which I have referred. So while I am proposing to support the second reading in order that further consideration can be given to the canteen licence proposition, I feel that my attitude on the measure, if I can get the opportunity to express it later, will be a very different one.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [2.42]: Before the mover replies to the second reading debate I would like to have some information on the Bill. It seems to me that it proposes to grant canteen licences for some people in certain districts. I do not see why we should provide a monopoly for only a few. If we were providing for a large number of workers in a district it would be fair. Everywhere in the Bill it seeks to provide for those people who are prospecting or mining for petroleum or who are engaged in exploration and prospecting work relating to petroleum.

Everywhere we look on that particular page of the Bill there is mention of nothing else but petroleum. It occurs to me that this is a Bill to provide neck oil for the people who are looking for other oil. I doubt whether that is right. If a canteen licence is to be granted to any body of men in any particular district they should be able to apply to the Licensing Court and obtain a canteen licence, but I am not prepared to agree to a monopoly being given to workers who are employed by the oil companies only.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [2.44]: I support the remarks made by the member for Fremantle. In my electorate of Gascoyne there is, within 25 miles of the oil companies, a whaling station which could come under the same category as the oil companies. I can see no provision in the Bill which will provide for a canteen licence to be issued to this whaling station.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: The men at Wundowie have a club.

Mr. NORTON: The workers at the whaling station do not have a club because most of the men are working for only three months of the year.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: So are the men at Wundowie.

Mr. NORTON: If a canteen licence is given to workers on the oil search, why not issue one to the men working on the whaling station? Then again, there are the large road gangs employing a considerable number of men, and they should be given canteen facilities as well, if they require them. The Bill provides that the facilities be extended to companies only, but why should the men working for the Main Roads Department not be allowed to have a canteen? It would be very nice if all such bodies of men could get canteen licences and be able to obtain a little beer at the end of the day's work. It would be a help in many ways, but it would also have to be well policed.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [2.46]: The mover deserves great credit for introducing this measure. He must have known it would arouse considerable controversy in this House, and would be of no personal benefit to himself. We should be honest with ourselves.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Are you not?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, and I hope the hon. member will also be honest. Just as the Premier said in the Betting Control Bill debate, let us face what is going on and let us not hide our heads in the sand, like ostriches, and declare that what we do not see does not matter. Looking at the Premier's electorate, the project at Wundowie had not been going on very long when it was found that the workers who went off for week-ends often did not come back to commence work on the following Monday.

Mr. J. Hegney: You are paying a great deal of attention to Wundowie.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am going to, and it is well worth looking into. The employees at Wundowie quite sensibly formed their own club, and the Licensing Court quite sensibly granted them a licence. So, for a nominal fee, if the employees at Wundowie want a glass of beer, they can get it at the club. The canteen is run very well and very strictly. As a result of the provision of this facility, the employees do not stay away after a week-end, and they do not drink liquor to excess in the club.

Mr. Heal: You have no objection to the men doing that at Wundowie.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, I think it is very sensible. I am only quoting what has been done to meet the demand of the workers. As a matter of fact, I have been a guest at the Wundowie Club and it appeared to be very well conducted. The facilities of the club meet the demands of a number of people, who rightly or wrongly, foolishly or otherwise, desire to have alcoholic beverages. The same applies at Pemberton. Ninety-nine per cent. of the members of the Pemberton Club consist of mill workers. That is also a very well conducted club. I can assure members that every member of the club is expected and is required to behave in a proper manner.

The Minister for Education: They behave just as well as the members of the Weld Club.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: They do. At the Weld Club also, members, if they so desire, can obtain alcoholic beverages. That is also a very strictly conducted club. If any member misbehaves there, just as if any member misbehaves himself in the Wundowie Club or the Pemberton Club, his action would not be tolerated.

Mr. Moir: Do the members in the Weld Club misbehave?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: They do not misbehave, and neither do the members of the Wundowie or Pemberton Clubs. There

is also a workers' club in Fremantle, and no doubt the member for that electorate frequently visits it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is a very good club.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is a club where the residents of Fremantle go to meet each other, and if they so desire they can enjoy a drink of beer or other alcoholic beverages. Where a number of workers desire to have alcoholic refreshment, and they happen to be in districts that provide few amenities, I see no objection to the facilities being given. In the search for oil it is quite possible that districts will not be stabilised for very long.

If oil is found at Rough Range—I hope it will be obtained in large quantities—then that district will remain stationary and perhaps other provisions can be made to meet the demands of the workers. But it is quite possible that within a year or two Rough Range will be forgotten, and other new fields of exploration will spring up. The member for Gascoyne will realise that the facilities which are available in the city are not found at Rough Range or Exmouth Gulf. Is there any objection to workers, who feel like it, having a cool beer or lemonade?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Who is objecting to that?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The member for Stirling said he did not like it very much.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: In having a cool drink of lemonade?

The Minister for Police: The conditions at Rough Range would not permit a workers' club licence being issued under the existing law, and that is why this Bill has been introduced.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I realise that. I am supporting the Bill. I am only saying that the law has been stretched as far as possible to enable all the people, not only members of the Weld, Perth or W.A. Clubs, to obtain alcoholic beverages if they so desire. The members of those clubs are not the only persons in the world who like a drink after work. Why should not a man who works hard be entitled to alcoholic beverages in a hot and dusty area?

The Premier: If this is a fair question, why should he not be entitled to have a bet?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Although I did speak on the Betting Control Bill, I entirely agree with the Premier. I think a person should be entitled to gamble if he wishes, but it is only the method to which objection has been raised. We have to be more careful about some things.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: We should be on our guard when you support a Bill.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I shall speak to the hon. member in the lobbies about that, but not here. He and I agree on many things. I see no objection to this Bill. It may not be worded in a manner that is desirable. The member for Gascoyne talks about the whaling station, but that is within a mile of licensed premises.

Mr. Norton: Not within 100 miles. The North-West whaling station is miles away.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I was referring to the other station at Babbage Island. In that case, I think the hon. member is justified in moving an amendment. He will be assured of my support. The next provision in the Bill deals with facilities to obtain liquor with meals. People who dine after the ordinary hour of 6.30 p.m., should be able to enjoy their meals with the same opportunity to obtain liquor as those who dine in the clubs.

Members of the Fremantle, Pemberton, Wundowie and other clubs can consume liquor up 11 p.m. I see no objection to that. Why should not a visitor to Western Australia receive the same facilities that most of us enjoy? Is there any reason why this courtesy should not be extended to him? Should we say to a visitor, "You cannot have a drink after hours, but I can go to the Weld Club or the Workers' Club and have a drink?"

The Premier: Could a visitor not be taken to the club?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, but the member must give notice beforehand.

The Minister for Education: That could be easily overcome.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Apart from that, visitors have to be invited and their names must be submitted 24 hours before, as the Premier knows.

The Premier: I do not know.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Do not look at me, either! I would not know.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I expect the members of the Fremantle Club observe the liquor laws just as any others.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They are very law-abiding, too.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: We have one of the most beautiful States of Australia.

The Minister for Education: It is the most beautiful.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I stand corrected. We do not want to attract only people from the Eastern States, but also visitors from Europe. The latter are accustomed to dining when they like and they can obtain liquor with meals. That fact has been appreciated in Victoria because an amendment has been made to the Act of that State to allow the privilege suggested in this Bill.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is 10 o'clock closing over there.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, which we have not got here. If one were to entertain a guest, it would be a very abrupt ending if the glasses are taken away at a

set time. If the Government is entertaining anyone in this House, he would not be turned away after closing time, and if he wanted a drink at 1 a.m. he would be able to obtain it.

The Premier: The Government does not entertain people up to that late hour of the night, but individual members do.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do.

The Premier: Then do not try to push the blame on to the Government.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Government is very hospitable, and we never know the day when an important guest might come here, such as the Premier from Northern Ireland, after 9 p.m. to listen to the debates. In that event I think the Premier would take him into his own room or into the dining-room to be entertained. If the guest expressed a desire for a whisky and soda, I am sure the Premier would oblige him. It is only right and proper that the visitor should have it.

The Premier: We would offer him a cup of tea.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, the Premier would not. I know the hospitality of the Premier. He may not have whisky and soda himself, but he will offer it to his guest. We must try to give to others what we have taken for ourselves.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is not that what we are trying to do?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Then what are you growling about?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am supporting the Bill.

The Premier: I think you are stonewalling it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: All right! If that is the attitude of the House, I am satisfied. I was replying to the member for Stirling who cast aspersions. I am glad to know that the Premier will support the Bill. It is unnecessary for me to say any more.

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [3.1]: I am not normally in favour of easing the conditions under which liquor can be obtained. But on many occasions in this Chamber I have supported the idea that we should cater to a greater extent for tourists; and I think that the Bill, particularly those parts relating to meals being provided late in the evening, and dealing with Sunday trading in places within 20 miles of Perth but outside the metropolitan area, will help in that direction. Incidentally, I think there should be a definition of "metropolitan area" in this regard.

There is a place in my electorate which has always been recognised as a tourist resort, and provision has been made for entertaining tourists and catering for their needs over the years. This Bill will go a long way towards making it more attractive for tourists, whether they be from our own State or from overseas. Tourists are coming here in greater numbers, and I think we should meet their requirements, and especially those of people who come from places where the licensing laws are much easier than ours, and where liquor can be obtained with meals at almost any hour of the day. I support the second reading.

MR. OLDFIELD (Maylands) [3.4]: I support the second reading with some reluctance. The only reason I favour it is because of the provision permitting canteen licences in isolated areas. It is a good move to give the court power to issue canteen licences for companies operating in outback areas, because their employees are entitled to every consideration, and to as many of the amenities that are enjoyed by people in the metropolitan area as can be provided. Technically the law is being broken in those areas, because I understand that at Learmonth the company arranges for the men on the site to have two bottles of beer a day.

The Minister for Police: It is not illegal.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I did not say whether it was or not. I was stating that technically the law was being broken, because liquor was bought and resold.

The Minister for Police: The company has a permit to do so.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I was unaware of that. Reselling liquor without a licence could be illegal. Whether the companies will put in facilities similar to army canteens and provide men with draught beer or a choice of drinks, or whether they will stick to the selling of bottled beer I do not know; but the granting of the right to establish canteens will at least encourage them to provide decent drinking facilities for their employees, who are not living under normal conditions. I support that part of the Bill. What I am opposed to is the back-door method of increasing hotel hours. Why not come out honestly?

The Minister for Works: Are you going to support a back-door method?

Mr. OLDFIELD: This is a back-door method of increasing the hours from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m.

The Minister for Works: And you are going to support it.

Mr. OLDIFIELD: I am not.

The Minister for Works: I thought you said you were.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am not. Why do not those supporting the Bill say openly, "We will amend the Act to provide for closing of hotels at 10 p.m. or 11 p.m."? I do not favour this method. All it does is to give hotel-keepers who desire to keep their premises open till 11 p.m. the right to impose a cover charge to the extent of the cost of a normal evening meal. The food

could be put on the table, but the law would not make a person eat it. So we will find that people who are out for an evening's spree, when they have to cease drinking at 9 p.m. in the normal lounge will say, "We will go into the dining-room." They will not mind paying 8s., or 10s., or 12s. 6d., or whatever may be the cost of a meal.

That will simply be a cover charge entitling men to drink for a further two hours. A party of four to six people will willingly pay that money and drink till 11 p.m. That is why I am opposed to this provision. I might view the matter differently if it were said that hotel hours were to be increased to 10 p.m. or 11 p.m. throughout the State. That proposition could be considered on its merits. A measure of that sort might be in the best interests of the general public. But this provision is not. It is merely in the interests of hotel proprietors who want to indulge in this kind of trade.

Mr. Hutchinson: It is in the interests of tourists.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We do not legislate for tourists, but for the people living here. If we are going to give something to tourists, why not give it to people who live here and pay taxes?

Mr. Hutchinson: We want to attract tourists.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If it is desired to do that by opening hotels till 11 p.m., then open all of them! People who wish to drink until that hour can avail themselves of this opportunity of doing so by paying a cover charge.

The Minister for Housing: You do not pay a cover charge here, but you drink here.

The Minister for Mines: And till all hours, too.

Mr. OLDFIELD: And work all hours, too.

The Minister for Mines: You keep the stewards up till all hours serving you.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am opposing an increase of hours till 11 p.m. That will assist the stewards.

The Minister for Mines: You should go home at 11 o'clock.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Let the hon. member keep to the Bill.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The point is that this provision will benefit any person who is prepared to go into a dining room and pay the price of a meal. Whether the meal is eaten or not does not mean a thing. That person will have the right to sit down and drink liquor. The law will not make him eat the meal.

Mr. Norton: How long will he be allowed to stay there?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Until he has eaten the meal. If he does not eat it, it remains in front of him. The hon. member asked how long people could remain drinking liquor. This provision could be abused, and legislation that has loopholes should be thrown out. No one will convince me that hotelkeepers will keep their dining-rooms open till 11 p.m. for the sale of food. It is liquor they want to sell, and they are not going to hurry customers. They are not going to say, "You have been here too long. Will you eat your food and leave?" So long as there is compliance with the law, they will allow people to remain on their premises until 11 o'clock.

Mr. Heal: Good luck to them!

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes, if this becomes law. But why not say to the workers of West Perth, "You can have a drink till 11 p.m."? Why say, "I am sorry. If you want a drink after 9 p.m. and do not belong to a club, you will have to go to town to one of the hotels and pay the 10s. cover charge, the cost of a meal"?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Do they have to do that?

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is what will happen. It will be a cover charge. The Bill states that so long as a meal is ordered and no less is charged for it than is ordinarily charged—

Mr. Norton: Is that in the metropolitan area?

Mr. OLDFIELD: It refers to any hotel. That is what will happen.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Any hotel that gets a special licence.

Mr. OLDFIELD: This does not refer to special licences.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Yes.

Mr. OLDFIELD: It means that any hotel that wishes to keep the dining-room open till 11 p.m. can serve any person between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: No.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mt. Lawley had his opportunity.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I know.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The hon. member knows what the Bill provides. I think he is very much in favour of it. He knows it will allow the Savoy and the Shaftesbury hotels to serve liquor till 11 p.m. to people who order meals.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: If they get a special licence. Read the Bill.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I have read the Bill. The hon. member has had a legal training and he knows what the Bill means. But he tries to confuse us, because we have not the measure in front of us. He knows what the Bill provides.

The other provision in the measure will allow the Licensing Court to use discretion in permitting certain hotels within a 20-mile radius of the city to open on Sundays because there may be special circumstances surrounding them. In order that my action may be consistent with that which I took here three years ago when I opposed Sunday trading for country hotels, I shall vote against this provision. Its adoption would mean that hotels nearer to the city would open on Sundays.

Where are we going to draw the line? I support the theory that if a man in Bunbury or Northam can have a drink on Sundays, workers in the metropolitan area are entitled to have one also. But this Parliament made a great mistake three years ago in permitting two hours' trading on Sundays. I know that many members who supported the measure on that occasion have regretted their action. If the proposal were brought before the House now, it would be opposed by certain members who supported it previously.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They did not tell you that, did they?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I know certain members who supported the proposal three years ago and who today regret the action they took.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They did not know their own minds.

Mr. OLDFIELD: They knew their own minds. They gave it a go, and they have seen the result. They know that where hotels are open for the hour before lunch and the hour before dinner, the whole social life of the town hinges around those sessions on Sunday. Cricket matches and football matches finish before five o'clock because most of the participants want to be at the five o'clock session. For the same reason, people do not go out shooting nor do they indulge in other normal sporting pursuits.

Mr. Norton: How do you know?

Mr. OLDFIELD: If one goes around the country towns, one finds out what is happening. We have only a few hotels that are situated outside the metropolitan area that can be considered as being tourist hotels. As the member for Stirling pointed out, no definition of "metropolitan area" is contained in the Act. I do not know how the court is going to define it. At one time the bona fide traveller clause mentioned a 25-mile radius, and that was amended, for the purposes of Sunday trading, to 20 miles. The hotels which readily come to mind as being those which will be granted permission to open for Sunday trading are, first of all, Yanchep. I always understood that Yanchep was outside a 20-mile radius, but I am informed that it is within it.

The Minister for Education: It is about 33 miles to Yanchep by road.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes, but I am informed that as the crow flies it is within the 20-mile radius.

Mr. Hutchinson: It is 19 miles from the G.P.O.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Other hotels in this category would be those at Naval Base, Parkerville, Mundaring, Kalamunda, and possibly Armadale. It was only recently that certain members when speaking on another Bill considered these places should be well inside the metropolitan area. I recollect a debate, three years ago, on this very issue, when, in regard to the 20-mile limit, it was said that people would be going out of the city on Sundays to Rockingham, Bullsbrook, the Travellers' Arms and Sawyer's Valley for the hour's session in the morning and again in the evening. Unfortunately that is what is actually happening.

Now it is suggested that these other hotels be brought into it. It is a nice little run to Kalamunda, which is about 17 miles from Perth, and Armadale is about 18 or 19 miles away. People who reside in the eastern or southern suburbs will have only 10 or 12 miles to travel to get to those places. What a ridiculous set-up that will be! People with motorcars will have no trouble getting there, and those without can go by public transport because both Armadale and Kalamunda are well served in that way. We will probably see a state of affairs where not only those with motorcars but those without will be able to get to these places.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You do not rely on the discretion of the Licensing Court.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The only hotels which could be considered are those I have enumerated. No others that are close to the metropolitan area could be considered. Kalamunda can definitely be regarded as a tourist hotel. If the court does not consider these hotels, the Bill might just as well not be introduced, because no others would be affected.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You do not want to give the Licensing Court any discretion.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Those are the only hotels in regard to which discretion can be used. I do not want any hotel licensed for Sunday trading. I opposed it three years ago, and I shall continue to oppose it.

Mr. Johnson: Have you ever had a drink on Sunday since?

Mr. OLDFIELD: If I have, that has little to do with it. I am entitled to go to any hotel that is open on Sunday and

have a drink without breaking the law. Because somebody does what is lawful, does not mean that he is in favour of it.

The Minister for Housing: If you were dinkum you would not go in on Sundays.

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is a ridiculous suggestion and typical of the arguments that the Minister brings forward.

The Minister for Housing: How can you be opposed to something and then do it?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am opposed to Sunday trading.

The Premier: But not to Sunday drinking.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am opposed to the sale of liquor on Sundays. I have no objection to a person taking a bottle of beer home so that he may have a drink on Sunday; and I think a resident in a hotel is just as entitled to have a drink with his meals.

The Premier: You said a moment ago that you had bought beer on Sunday.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I said that it is quite lawful for anyone to go into a hotel that is open for trading on Sunday without committing an offence.

The Premier: You said you had done it.

Mr. OLDFIELD: What I said was in answer to an interjection.

Mr. Brady: Do you buy petrol on Sundays?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes.

Mr. Brady: You opposed a Bill to prevent its sale on Sundays, did you not?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes.

Mr. Brady: Yet you do not believe in Sunday trading!

Mr. OLDFIELD: I do not think there is any connection between petrol and liquor. To continue the debate—

The Minister for Housing: What about concluding?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I have mentioned the hotels that are close to Perth, and the court, in its discretion, will no doubt grant them a licence because it will consider that is the intention of the measure. This is like a back-door method of extending the hotel hours to 11 o'clock. Why not bring in a Bill to license metropolitan hotels for the two hours? This is going to include hotels which are definitely in the metropolitan area, so why not bring them all in? If a measure for that purpose were introduced, I would oppose it, but if the principle is to be extended, it should be done properly. In supporting the second reading, I do so with the two reservations I have mentioned.

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING (Hon. H. E. Graham) [3.26]: We have just listened to the usual instalment of twaddle from the member for Maylands. I suggest to him that before he makes his declarations—so full of virtue as he would have us believe—he should cast his mind back to what he did in 1951. I find he did not speak against Sunday trading. I find that someone by the name of Graham moved an amendment to allow Sunday trading in the metropolitan area as well as in the country districts, and he received only nine supporters, one of whom was a person by the name of Oldfield; yet a few minutes ago the hon. member in all seriousness endeavoured to make us believe that he is opposed to Sunday trading as he was in 1951. The "Hansard" records are against him.

Mr. Oldfield: Did you look at the division list on Sunday trading?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: That is what I am talking about.

Mr. Oldfield: I said that if the country was to have it, it should apply everywhere.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: As a matter of fact, the hon. member did not speak on the clause.

Mr. Oldfield: You know what I said to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I suggest that the hon. member look at page 1549 of the "Parliamentary Debates" for 1951 in order to refresh his memory.

Mr. Oldfield: I remember that. I also voted against Sunday trading.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: That was the clause that provided for Sunday trading.

Mr. Oldfield: That was your amendment. I supported your amendment, but opposed the clause.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I can merely repeat that the member for Maylands should refresh his memory.

Mr. Oldfield: That amendment was defeated.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: Yes, but the hon. member assisted me in my endeavour to get it through. Other members defeated it.

Mr. Oldfield: I opposed the clause.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: However, we are not discussing the member for Maylands, but the Bill. The hon. member spoke about back-door methods, cover charges and all the rest of it. Perhaps he is not aware of the fact that he supported the clause to allow any person who purchased a meal in a hotel on a

Sunday to have liquor served with the meal. The member for Maylands reeks of hypocrisy in this matter, and with respect to his aspersion that he casts against us of endeavouring to do things by back-door methods, and by saying that instead of genuine meals being provided in the ordinary way there will, in fact, be a cover charge.

This is something that has been in operation on Sundays for the past three years. Neither the member for Maylands nor anybody else can give examples of abuse of that provision. What is the position at the moment? Unless a hotel has a special or an occasional licence, it cannot serve liquor after 9 p.m. in the metropolitan area or the country districts other than the Goldfields. There is nothing to stop people from purchasing unlimited supplies of liquor and taking them to well-known restaurants in the metropolitan area.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: As much as they like.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: Yes, and at any hour of the night or morning, as the case may be. Let me quote an example. Three weeks ago, the principal of an important British firm visited Western Australia and, in connection with my portfolio of Housing, I escorted him to certain suburbs to show what was being done. That evening a dinner was given in his honour by a certain firm carrying on business in the city. The appointed time of assembly was 8 p.m., and we gathered and had, I think, only two convivial drinks between 8 and 9 p.m., because we were interested in our respective points of view. Of course, at 9 o'clock we were compelled to leave the lounge and we went into the dining-room. The meal continued for a considerable time without any liquor being served.

What will happen in future to that form of entertainment is this: The distinguished visitor and those associated with him will go to a hotel and drink in the lounge until 9 o'clock, and then repair, with their arms full of liquor of one sort or another, to a restaurant where they can enjoy their meal and their comradeship until a late hour at night or until early in the morning.

We all know that a number of leading hotels in the city have special licences for certain occasions so that people are able to enjoy liquor with their meals; alternatively, they have a form of cocktail evening to celebrate marriages, birthdays and the like. There is no abuse of that privilege, and as this will enable the present practice in respect of other than licensed premises to be extended to hotels, in my opinion it is worth supporting. At present, hundreds of people, including members of Parliament, drink to their heart's delight on other than licensed premises. That happens night after night, and to my mind the proposal in the Bill is a commonsense and logical approach. It will bring drinking back to hotels which, after all, are the premises licensed for the purpose and is the logical place where drinking should take place.

In respect of the other provision in the Bill, I leave it to those who represent the more far-flung parts of the State to determine the issue or give us some guidance. For my part, I query whether the proposed establishment of canteens should be confined to the oil industry. Without being specific, I can visualise groups of workers whose vocation takes them to most isolated spots, with fewer amenities than are provided for workmen engaged in exploration for oil in the north-western tip of the State.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You could have a road gang in an isolated place for months.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: That is so, and, of course, their living conditions and other amenities would not be comparable with those I have just mentioned. Some mileage limit or some range within distance of existing licensed premises has been suggested. But I think these matters are best left to the good sense and judgment of a body such as the Licensing Court. It is not likely to grant licences indiscriminately. As a matter of fact, I understand members of the court have some misgiving, which would be of guidance and assistance to them in matters such as canteen licences, following the establishment of registered clubs in a number of country towns. Many of them are having an effect upon hotels and, indirectly, upon the accommodation provided for travellers and others.

With that experience at the back of their minds, I do not think members of the court are likely to grant in any localities canteen licences that are likely to cause any great detriment to hotels which, in isolated centres, are most essential. For that reason, I do not think there is any necessity to define a mileage limit. I am content to place my confidence in the members of the Licensing Court. Those are my thoughts in connection with the Bill, and I commend the member for Murchison, more especially in respect to the earlier provision, because of the farcical situation that exists at present.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie [3.36]: I think the origin of the proposal to establish canteens on the oilfields should be explained to members. As Minister for Police, I was approached some months ago by the oil company operating in the North-West. It was under the misapprehension that I controlled the Licensing Act. The representatives of the company put forward this proposal. At present, they are acting quite

legally, under a permit to supply each of their workmen with two bottles of beer a day. But, because of the weight of the bottles, the cost and the distance they have to be transported, the company finds that the overall costs are somewhat prohibitive. In addition, the company is of opinion that if beer is sold by the bottle it can be resold to someone else, and certain men can get too much for their own welfare and for the welfare of the company.

As a result, the company requested that some kind of licence should be granted so that it could serve bulk beer by the glass. Under our present licensing laws—although we have many kinds of licences—it was found, upon examination by the Licensing Court and the Police Department, that the conditions operating in the North would not entitle the company to sell or receive bulk liquor. Therefore, a special licence was required, and that is the reason for the provision in the Bill.

Upon receipt of a letter from the company, I asked the opinion of the Commissioner of Police and, with certain reservations, he was not opposed to the granting of a special licence such as I have outlined. I then sent the proposal to the Minister for Justice, who is in charge of the Licensing Act, and he, in turn, placed the matter before the Licensing Court. The members of that body were quite agreeable; in fact, all parties were agreeable to this proposal.

I will now explain why it has been incorporated in a private member's Bill introduced by the member for Murchison. If we had not introduced it in this way, it would have been necessary to introduce two separate measures to amend the Licensing Act, and the hon. member was kind enough to agree to the proposal to incorporate this amendment, required by the oil company and agreed to by the police and the Licensing Court, in his Bill. I hope members will agree to it, because there is much to recommend it.

However, I hope the proposal is not overloaded by extending it so that it will include road gangs and the like because it may not be possible to supervise a canteen for a road gang in the same way as it would be possible to supervise a canteen under the control of a highly efficient company, such as the oil company which operates in the north of this State. I am satisfied that if the permit to sell bulk beer instead of two bottles per man per day is granted, the company will, in its own interests, ensure that there is no abuse of the privilege. They will see that a man does not drink himself into d.ts. and impair his efficiency as a worker. The company will be in a position to appoint people to supervise the canteen and keep the consumption of liquor within bounds. But in the case of a road gang, working 300 or 400 miles from the metropolitan area, it would be difficult to appoint a person to supervise the canteen.

For my part, I do not fancy the other proposal in the Bill. I am inclined to agree with the member for Maylands that it is merely a way of increasing the hours in which hotels will be permitted to remain open. I have heard a good deal about liquor being supplied with meals—that is, meals outside recognised hours—but I know nothing of it. Let any member go to a hotel and ask for a meal half-an-hour after the ordinary meal hour and he will find that he will meet with a cool reception and, in all probability, will not be able to get any meal at all.

Mr. Oldfield: If one goes into the dining-room a quarter of an hour before the meal is due to finish, one does not get served.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: On one occasion, at a country hotel, I was ten minutes late and I had to pay overtime rates for the waitress and the cook so that my party could have a meal. I know nothing of this idea that licensed premises will supply a person with a meal at 10 or 11 o'clock at night.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: This is only a late development.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I do not know where they do it. If one goes to a country hotel at 10 o'clock at night and asks for a meal, all one gets is a piece of cheese and dry biscuits. On one occasion, I was a member of the select committee inquiring into war service land settlement, and we travelled to Mt. Barker. Although we had booked into the hotel for dinner, we did not get there until about half past nine at night. All that we could get were some dry biscuits and cheese—not even a cup of tea. I think this idea that hotels will provide meals at all hours of the day or night is far-fetched.

However, I hope members will agree to the proposal for a canteen for those working in the far north. They are working under arduous conditions and for most of the year the climate is hot. If that provision is agreed to, the men will be able to purchase liquor by the glass instead of two bottles per man per day.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.10 p.m.

MR. WILD (Dale) [4.10]: I wish briefly to support the second reading. The question of providing canteen facilities for the men employed in those isolated parts of the State is an excellent idea. I listened with great interest to the Minister for Police indicating the reasons underlying the amendment. If we wish to encourage men to go out into the far distant spots, they are entitled to as many of the amenities as people in the metropolitan area enjoy or at any rate to as many as can be provided.

The second question that interests me greatly is that of affording people an opportunity to have a drink with a meal. A

few of the larger hotels cater for a better type of meal, and the present restrictions are very aggravating when one is entertaining guests. One might move into the dining-room at 8 or 8.15 p.m. and, after having soup, possibly a fish entree, oysters or something of that sort, the time is 9 o'clock. When the meat course is served, which normally would be the time when one would be looking for a glass of wine or whisky, one is denied that right.

On a couple of occasions during recent months, I have been to the Shaftesbury Hotel, which has been catering for this type of entertaining private parties, and the situation that develops is most ridiculous. On such an occasion, one might not go into the dining-room until 9 p.m., and if one wants a drink with a meal, one has to take a half bottle of liquor from under the table, and in doing so, feels like a half convicted criminal. That is all right so long as one is not seen by the hotel staff, but human nature being what it is, that is what happens under the present restrictions.

During my visit to England and the Continent last year—the Premier must have observed this during his trip—meals are served much later than they are here, and it is very pleasant to be able to sit quietly at one's meal and not have to rush either the meal or the drink. It might be 10 or 11 p.m. before the meal is finished. From what I saw, there was no abuse of that class of eating and drinking, and if similar conditions were adopted here, I am sure that our people would conduct themselves quite fittingly.

The Bill represents a forward step and it is one that we ought to take. One of the chief impressions I formed while overseas last year was that we in Western Australia had been reasonably sane in adopting 9 o'clock closing for hotels, but that in the main, we are as mad as human beings can be when it comes to a consideration of the whole of our liquor laws. If these laws were liberalised, I am satisfied that there would be no more drinking than there is at present, that it would be better drinking, and that the drinking would be much better controlled.

MR. RHATIGAN (Kimberley) [4.15]: I agree that it would be of benefit to the oil companies if they were granted the privilege of having canteens. Members who visited the oil fields during the winter would hardly realise what the climate there is like in summer. One could see how hard the men employed there work and we must remember that they will be engaged there throughout the summer. For that reason I think they are entitled to this privilege, whether they wish to partake of beer, lemonade or any other liquid refreshment.

But I do not think that the privilege should be extended to the oil companies alone and I will support any amendment which seeks to extend this amenity to other employees whom I believe are equally deserving. At places such as Yampi Sound liquor is at present sold in bottles and I think canteen facilities could well be provided there. The Bill contains the safeguard that it is necessary for the company concerned to make application for a licence and it is then up to the Licensing Court to decide whether or not the privilege shall be granted.

I am convinced that those associated with an industry such as that at Yampi Sound should be granted this class of licence if it is desired. I am sorry the member for Nedlands is not present, but possibly Air Beef might wish to avail itself of the privilege of a canteen and so assist its workers in that enterprise, forgetting the pastoralists for the time being. I might add that on most cattle and sheep stations it is customary for the employees to be able to purchase a bottle of beer each per day which shows that the owners are at last realising that this practice is advantageous to both themselves and the employees. I support the second reading.

MR. MAY (Collie) [4.17]: I feel that the Bill has been drawn and quartered far beyond what was in the mind of the member for Murchison when he introduced it. I believe his intention was that canteen amenities should be made available in districts where there are no hotel facilities provided for the workers who, I am convinced, he believes are entitled to such a service.

I am not a great advocate of liquor, but have always tried to be fair in my understanding of the problem. I believe the purpose of the Bill is to provide amenities that are at present beyond the reach of a number of employees. I will not support the Bill in its present form, but would be willing to give it my blessing if it included only areas such as East Kimberley, West Kimberley, Broome, Pilbara, Roebourne, Gascoyne and the Murchison.

Personally, I have always maintained that people who are game to go into such areas to earn their livelihood should have available to them every possible amenity, as it is only in that way that we have any chance of populating the vast areas of the outback. One provision in the Bill sets out who can enjoy the amenity if it is provided and included are companies—

> exploring, prospecting or mining for petroleum, pursuant to the provisions of the Petroleum Act in any of the licensing districts mentioned in Subsection (1) of Section 44A of this Act.

In my view primary producers in the areas concerned should also be included. Bona fide travellers are provided for, but

no mention is made of the primary producer. Unless certain of the provisions of the Bill are amended, I will vote against it and I am not in favour of any area further south than Geraldton being included, as in the southern part of the State there is already ample provision made in this regard. If the sponsor of the measure is prepared to move to have it amended in the direction I have indicated, he will receive my support because I am at all times anxious to do what I can to make the lives of people in outback areas more bearable than they are at present.

MR. O'BRIEN (Murchison—in reply) [4.22]: I wish to thank those members who have indicated their support of the Bill. Canteen licences have been explained by the Minister for Police. I understand that owing to the increase in a number of employees in outback areas and the number of bottles of beer supplied to them, this service is becoming expensive to both employers and workers and in that way the supplying of bulk beer would represent a great advantage to those concerned.

On perusing the Licensing Act I found that to overcome the difficulty it would be necessary to include the letter (p) in the measure in order that there might be inserted in the Licensing Act, "(p) Canteen licences." I think canteen facilities should be made available in remote areas wherever there are large numbers of men congregated although I agree that it would be abusing the provision to grant licences to small gangs.

At Mt. Ida recently a very respectable gentleman was fined for trying to oblige his employees, whereas if canteen licences for remote areas had been included in the Act, he would not have been committing an offence. Although some of the clauses in the Bill may appear confusing, in reality they are simply machinery provisions to bring the canteen licences into operation. If it is so desired, when the Bill is in Committee I will be agreeable to it being amended in any reasonable way. I trust that members will agree to the second reading of the measure.

The member for Stirling painted a very gloomy picture and indicated that, in his opinion, hotels are everything that is bad. Although he is not present at the moment, I might say that if he purchased a hotel and was in difficulty and came to me, I would do my best to help him overcome his problems. I would even be prepared to write up a sign stating—

> In this hive we are all alive.
> The liquor makes us funny,
> So if you are dry come in and try
> The flavour of Bill O'Brien's honey.

The provision to enable a glass of liquor to be supplied with a meal is nothing out of the way. At present the licensing area has a 20-mile radius, but there are many places situated just inside or outside the metropolitan area. A place may be half a mile outside the radius and yet one may have to travel perhaps 26 miles by road in order to reach it. My honest opinion is that it is very unjust. When one has to travel over a made road to reach a particular area, it should be left to the court's discretion. All the Bill seeks is permission under the court's jurisdiction. It has the power to refuse or accept an application.

I know of many people who come from the Eastern Goldfields and the Murchison who like to have a meal between the hours of 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. They are accustomed to doing that in the Murchison because the hotels there do not close until 11 p.m. We have also tourists coming to this State who are accustomed to having a glass of liquor with their meal at a late hour. So I think the Bill is a simple one. Admittedly any legislation dealing with liquor always seems to be contentious, but what this Bill seeks to insert in the Licensing Act is not very much. I ask members to support the second reading and if they have reasonable amendments to propose, I will give them every consideration.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. O'Brien in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Sections 44A, 44B and 44C added:

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: In order to give everyone throughout the State a reasonable chance of getting this glass of beer that so many desire, I do not think we should let the Bill go through in its present form by merely providing for the districts of East Kimberley, West Kimberley and others where the search for oil is being conducted. Therefore, I move an amendment—

> That after the word "districts" in line 9, page 2, the words "East Kimberley, West Kimberley, Broome, Pilbara, Roebourne, Gascoyne or Murchison or such other licensing district," be struck out.

Mr. MAY: I oppose the amendment because it seeks to do the very thing that I do not want done. If the member for Fremantle had struck out all the words after "Murchison" ending with the words

"from time to time," I would have agreed to his amendment. However, as I understand the measure, the idea was to provide amenities for those who reside in the districts mentioned in the Bill. I am totally opposed to any extension of the licensing laws outside these areas.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	14
Noes	13
Majority for	1

Ayes.	
Mr. Abbott	Mr. Norton
Mr. Brady	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wild
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Yates
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Nimmo (*Teller.*)

Noes.	
Mr. Andrew	Mr. Manning
Mr. Brand	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Court	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Owen
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hoar	Mr. May
Mr. Lapham	(*Teller.*)

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

> That after the word "by" in line 21, page 2, the words "a company" be struck out, with a view to inserting the words "the employer."

We do not want this provision to apply only to a company, because the men concerned may not be employed by a company.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It could be the Government.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes, that is so.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Like they are doing at Kwinana.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes, the hon. member is quite right.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I have no objection to the amendment.

Amendment (to strike out words) put and passed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

> That the words "the employer" be inserted in lieu of the words struck out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not mind what the hon. member is doing, but if he intends to make this legislation apply in a general manner, it would be restrictive if this amendment to insert the words "the employer" were agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It is a canteen.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is too restrictive in my opinion and I will not vote for the amendment.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I move—

> That progress be reported.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	17
Noes	13
Majority for	4

Ayes.	
Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hawke	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. May
Mr. Kelly	(*Teller.*)

Noes.	
Mr. Abbott	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Brand	Mr. Owen
Mr. Court	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hill	Mr. Wild
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Yates
Mr. Manning	Mr. Nimmo
Sir Ross McLarty	(*Teller.*)

Motion thus passed.

Progress reported.

BILLS (3)—RETURNED.

1, Native Welfare.

2, Radioactive Substances.

3, Betting Control.
With amendments.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Report.

Report of Standing Orders Committee now considered.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The report of the Standing Orders Committee has been before the House for two weeks and I have no doubt that every member has carefully scrutinised it and will be aware of the proposed amendments. In the schedule, the reasons are given, and if members follow it, the purpose of the recommendations will become apparent.

> Standing Order No. 43: Add at the end the words "or Chairman of Committees as the case may be."

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the proposed amendment is—

> The amendment is suggested to obviate the necessity for the Chairman having to report to the Speaker immediately notice is taken of the

absence of a quorum. Power is given to the Chairman to ascertain whether a quorum is present, and only to report to the Speaker if he is unable to form a quorum. This new provision conforms with the practice of the Legislative Council.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 379: Delete this Standing Order and insert a new one as follows:—

If notice is taken of the absence of a Quorum in Committee, the Chairman shall count the Committee, and if, after the bells have been rung for two minutes, a Quorum be not formed, or if it appears upon a Division that a Quorum is not present, he shall leave the Chair of the Committee and the Speaker shall resume the Chair.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recommendation is the same as for the previous one. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 47: Delete the words "if seconded" in lines 3 and 4; and delete the words "or seconded" in line 5.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recommendation is—

It has been the practice not to seek a seconder for formal motions, as is borne out in "May," 15th edition, p. 386, "Where an unopposed return is moved, or other formal motion made, the formality of seconding the motion is not generally observed, but is taken to be tacitly complied with."

In this House for many years past when a motion is put forward, the Speaker has not called for a seconder. This practice has grown and for that reason, it is recommended that the Standing Order be amended. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 48: Delete the words "Questions and" in line 4.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recommendation is—

Now that Notices of Questions are handed in to the Clerks at the Table these words are no longer necessary in this Standing Order.

As indicated the inclusion of the words proposed to be deleted are no longer necessary and I therefore move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 106: Delete the words "And if a Member be not in his place when the Notice of Motion given by him is called on, or fails to rise and move the same, it shall be withdrawn from the Notice Paper."

Insert in lieu the words "If a Member not present when the Notice of Motion given by him is called on, another duly authorised Member may either move the same or seek its postponement."

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recommendation is—

A need for this alteration is in the case of a member who has given notice to disallow a by-law or regulation. If given early in the session, such notice may not be moved for some weeks owing to the precedence given to the Address-in-reply. A member absent through sickness or other urgent cause may then be too late under the provisions of the Interpretation Act to give a further notice of motion.

The proposal is to meet the situation by deleting certain words from Standing Order 106 and inserting the others set out in lieu. I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 122: Insert after the word "second" in the third line the words "or third". Delete the words "an Order of the Day (not being the second reading of a Bill)" in lines 4 and 5.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recomendation is—

This will provide for the mover of the third reading of a Bill to have the right to reply as has been the usual practice. The words to be deleted are considered to be unnecessary.

I move—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 123: Delete this Standing Order as the position is fully covered in No. 122 as amended.

On motion by Mr. J. Hegney, the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Orders Nos. 127 and 128: Delete these Standing Orders.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recommendation is—

> These are considered obsolete and have been deleted by other Parliaments and no longer observed in the United Kingdom Parliament. They are a survival of the ancient privileges that no report of proceedings should be made either by a "Hansard" or newspaper reporter. If retained they are very easy to evade.

Members who have been here for some time will be aware that they are not permitted to read from a paper or quote from "Hansard" for the current session. The Committee has considered Standing Orders Nos. 127 and 128, which, if enforced, will prevent speakers from quoting "Hansard" or newspaper reports. As this restriction is outmoded, the Committee recommends that these Standing Orders be deleted. I move—

> That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 157: Delete the words "duly seconded" in line 2.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reasons that I have given for the amendment to Standing Order 47 apply in this instance. I move—

> That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 159: Delete the words "and seconding" in line 3.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reasons for this are covered by the reasons given in connection with the amendment to Standing Order 47. I move—

> That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 202: Delete the words "and all the Members are in their places" in lines 1 and 2.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reason for the recommendation is—

> This assumes that members are seated in their places and do not move to vote until directed by the Speaker, whereas in practice members move to voting positions as soon as bells commence to ring.

In accordance with the usual practice, members move to voting positions as soon as bells commence to ring and are in their places when the Speaker proceeds to put the question to the House. I move—

> That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Orders 238 and 239: Delete these and insert a new Standing Order in lieu:—

> Whenever a Message from the Governor is received, it shall be read by the Speaker, but not during a debate, or so as to interrupt a Member whilst speaking.

The reason for the recommendation is—

> The Standing Orders to be deleted are obsolete and do not conform to present practice.

I move—

> That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 249: Add the words "or adjourned as the House may decide."

Mr. J. HEGNEY: This Standing Order reads as follows:—

> During any conference the business of the Legislative Assembly shall be suspended.

The reason for the recommendation is as follows:—

> This would enable the sitting of the House either to be suspended or adjourned during a conference as the House itself may decide.

I move—

> That the recommendation be agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am not sure that the committee could not have gone a little further than this. I do not think there is any need to suspend or adjourn the House. Why cannot a conference take place while the House is sitting? I know that a Minister may have to take part in

a debate, but in a case like that the Government could always adjourn the House. It seems to me to be silly that members have to loll around the House while a conference is taking place, whereas business could be conducted.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The Standing Order provides for a suspension of a sitting while a conference is taking place. The amendment would provide for the House to be adjourned, but the conference could proceed and a report be submitted at the next sitting day.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I understand that point of view. But is it not silly that while a conference is taking place, members have to loll around about the corridors, when perhaps Estimates could be discussed? If important Bills were being considered, the Government, if it thought fit, could adjourn the House. I would prefer to see this Standing Order go overboard altogether. I move an amendment—

> That Standing Order No. 249 be struck out.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I do not know that there is any need for the deletion of this Standing Order, which provides for a suspension of a sitting while a conference is being held. The committee's recommendation would provide for the House to be adjourned. I appreciate the fact that it frequently happens that when a conference takes place at the end of a session members have to wait for a long time for the result. But if important Bills were being discussed, any Government would be reluctant to allow a debate thereon to proceed when some of its members were engaged in conference and a vote might be cast with which they might not agree.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not agree with the hon. member. We may send our managers to a conference and while they are there some important matter might arise. In that event they would be debarred from taking any action.

Mr. JAMIESON: I think there is something in the amendment. When, in such circumstances, a vote is taken, I feel sure that pairs could be arranged. What is suggested in the amendment would expedite the business of the House towards the end of the session.

Hon. D. BRAND: I hope the suggestion made by the member for Mt. Lawley will not be agreed to. We have overcome what did seem to be a real waste of time by keeping members lolling around because the House could not be adjourned. It is true that Estimates might be discussed; on the other hand, important business of a highly controversial nature might come before the House. If there is any merit in what the member for Mt. Lawley has put forward, then I consider his suggestion should be given further consideration, because it goes much further than what is intended by the recommendation.

Mr. HILL: Would the House be in order in taking a vote if three members were absent, attending a conference?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: They would hear the division bells.

Mr. HILL: No. It might be a non-party matter, but an important one, and the votes of the conference managers might make all the difference. Would the House, in those circumstances, be in order in taking a vote?

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you want an opinion from me on the point?

Mr. HILL: I have raised the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Standing Order is deleted, the business of the House would go on, and if members were away for any reason whatsoever, the House would still be in order in continuing with its business.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Returned from the Council with amendments.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH (RATING APPEALS) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [5.15]: The principal Act comes under the administration of the Minister for Local Government, and as his representative in this Chamber, I have had the Bill referred to the Local Government Department. While it has no objection to any of the proposals in it, it is doubtful whether at least two of the three will achieve the object desired by the hon. member.

The first proposal is to substitute in Section 9 for the words "unfair or incorrect" the words "not fair, or is unjust, inequitable or incorrect, whether by itself or by comparison with other valuations and rate assessments made by the council, such person." This proposal will, in effect, give an appellant much wider grounds on which to base his appeal, and will be a direction to the court to give broader consideration, than it does at present, to the matters that come before it.

As an observer at the sittings of the last City of Perth appeal court, I consider it to have about the most farcical appeal procedure that one could imagine. In my opinion, it adopts an entirely wrong attiture, although the procedure probably makes it easy for itself. A ratepayer who feels that his rates or valuation have been unfairly increased compared with his nextdoor neighbour, or someone else in the locality, considers himself to be aggrieved, and he lodges an appeal in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

When he appears before the appeal court he is confined to answering two questions. The first is: Would you sell your property for the valuation set by the city valuer? We know quite well that valuations and rates are closely associated with respect to the raising of a sufficient amount of money for the local authority to carry on its functions. One of two policies can be adopted—a high valuation and a low rate; or a low valuation and a high rate. It is necessary, of course, for a local authority to raise the amount of money that it requires to carry on its work.

The other question that the appeal court asks is: The basis of calculation provides that your house is worth, say, £3 a week. Would you be prepared to let it at that rate? The court confines itself to these two questions, and objection is taken to that approach. A man might know that his house is identical with that of his next-door neighbour, yet he is rated 50 per cent. or 100 per cent. above him. He might be aware that his property is rated 100 per cent. above a similar property in another part of the district, and that is what has caused the outburst of indignation in the Wembley area. For some reason best known to himself, the city valuer, when he decided to raise the rates anything from 20 to 100 per cent.—mostly about 90 or 100 per cent.—for those living in the Wembley area, did not make an increase in the valuations or rates in other portions of the municipality on anything like the same scale. I repeat that it was the most farcical appeal procedure that one could witness.

Mr. Court: Is the Government of the opinion that the appeal authority is acting outside the law?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know, as I have not consulted it in this matter but am expressing my opinion as a private member. In that capacity, I would say the authority is not operating outside the scope of the Act.

The great anomaly in the Act is that the annual valuation—as set out in the Act—must not be less than 4 per cent. of the capital value. We know that houses have increased sixfold in value owing to the reduced purchasing power of money, and the result is that while the 4 per cent. may have been fair and reasonable 15 years ago, it now inflates the annual value to such an extent that prohibitive rates are inflicted on people if the city valuer feels inclined to inflict them.

The proposal in the Bill is that the appellant be given a wider field on which to base his appeal and the Department of Local Government has no objection to the widening of the grounds on which appeals may be made. The measure would allow the appellant to appeal against what he considered to be an anomaly in the rating as between his property and some other in the area. The remarkable thing about the revaluations in the Wembley area by the Perth city valuer this year was that for the previous five years he had been doing the valuations and there had been an increase of only £8 or £10 in the annual values each year, and then suddenly—for some reason best known to himself—he increased them on an average by about 90 per cent.

It is obvious that either he was incompetent or did not know his job for the previous five years or that he increased the valuations far above what was fair and reasonable, yet the appellants, when they went to the court, were confined to answering the two questions I have mentioned. I think there were something in the vicinity of 80 or 90 appeals and I do not think any of them were upheld, simply because the court would not inform itself beyond those two points. I have no objection to the proposed wider basis for appeals.

The second proposal is to add after the word "appeal" in the last line of Subsection (1) the words "on the grounds stated in the notice of appeal." The Local Government Department thinks this might be dangerous from the appellant's point of view, inasmuch as if he did not know there were four grounds on which he could appeal and stated only one of them, the court would be able to take evidence and consider his appeal only on that one point.

For instance, if the appellant did not know that the grounds could be that the rating was not fair, that it was unjust, that it was inequitable or incorrect, and stated in his appeal notice only that he was appealing on the ground that the rating was not fair, in the opinion of the officer in charge of local government, the court would hear evidence only on that one phase. I therefore suggest to the hon. member that he should not proceed with that provision and should agree to leave the Act as it would be with the inclusion of the first proposed amendment, as that would give him wider scope, because if the appellant included only one ground of appeal, the Act would give him the right to appeal on all grounds and he would be able to adduce evidence on each of them.

The third proposal is that for the purpose of determining the comparisons referred to in the subsection in question, the board shall accept as evidence valuations made by the members of the Commonwealth Institute of Valuers in actual practice. After making inquiries, we found that there are a number of competent and approved valuers outside of that institute and if the hon. member considers it advisable—as a private member I do not think it is advisable for him to proceed with this proposal—and the Local Government Department has no objection, it is suggested that in addition to members of the Commonwealth Institute of Valuers in actual practice, provision should be made that valuations by any approved valuer shall be taken.

That is the opinion expressed. We have no objection to the main principle of the Bill but think that the second amendment would be inadvisable from the appellant's point of view. As regards the third amendment, if the hon. member wishes to proceed with it, the Local Government Department will have no objection.

On motion by Mr. Johnson, debate adjourned.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [5.30] in moving the second reading said: I wish to apologise to the House for the late presentation of this Bill but I would point out that it was completely outside our control because the necessity for it arose as a result of the decision of the Privy Council in the appeal case of Hughes and Vale in connection with interstate road transport. Once that result became known we were in constant touch with the Eastern States for the purpose of finding out, firstly, the details of the Privy Council decision and, secondly, what Eastern States Transport Ministers considered would be necessary and in the interests of the States.

Last week in Sydney a meeting of Transport Ministers was held but because of the little effect that it was considered the Privy Council decision would have on Western Australia, I did not attend. Nevertheless, the Ministers met and decided that, for the protection of the roads and the public, and for two or three other matters which I shall refer to later, it was necessary that each State Government should introduce legislation. The provisions in this Bill follow a general pattern. In passing, I might mention that I am not certain whether South Australia intends to introduce this legislation at present; but our information from the Eastern States is that Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, the three States most affected by interstate transport, have decided to introduce legislation along these lines. Recently the Crown Solicitor of Victoria was in this State and he gave us some information about the position.

The Bill does not provide for anything which would attempt to by-pass or upset the decision of the Privy Council. I think members will agree with the four provisions in the Bill and consider them to be fair and reasonable. One provision is for the licensing of vehicles operating interstate. There will be no discretion so far as the transport authorities are concerned about the issue of licences unless, in their opinion, a vehicle is unsafe or unroadworthy or it constitutes a danger to the travelling public and other users of the road. In such instances they would have the right to refuse a licence or if a driver was proved to be a person of bad character a licence could be refused. In all other cases anyone wishing to operate a vehicle interstate will be able, as of right, to obtain a licence from the transport authority in this State for the purpose of operating interstate.

Another provision gives the transport authority power to require the payment of fees for the use of the roads. I do not think anyone could raise any logical objection to this. From the border of Western Australia to Perth is approximately 900 miles and if interstate road hauliers have the use of the road, I do not think anyone can logically object to their paying a reasonable fee—and I emphasise the word "reasonable"—because if such fees as would constitute a prohibition were imposed we would be creating the same position as was in existence prior to the appeal case.

If this Bill is agreed to, there is no intention to alter the transport fees already in operation. We will adopt the same scale of fees for a 900 mile journey for interstate vehicles as we would for vehicles operating on a 900 mile journey within the State. In other words, the fees charged for the use of our roads for interstate traffic will be the same as those charged for intrastate traffic, and they will not be altered in the future.

Hon. D. Brand: Does it mean that the loading on to the railway at Norseman will go by the board?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: We will have no power to compel interstate vehicles to unload on to the trains at Norseman. According to the decision of the Privy Council, that is no longer possible.

Hon. D. Brand: Does it mean that a person could take a load from Brisbane to Bunbury?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Yes. We want the power to levy the same fees for the use of our roads as for a like

journey intrastate. Prior to this, the Transport Board has allowed the majority of interstate hauliers to bring their loads through because their cargoes were such that they did not lend themselves to offloading on to the trains at Norseman. We have charged fees of £2 per ton for the use of our roads, which includes a journey of 900 miles from the border to Perth and a further 900 miles on the return journey. Those fees are identical with those levied on vehicles operating intrastate. We also provide in the Bill that the transport authority will be able to impose certain restrictions which will ensure public safety and will prevent an abuse of our roads. That provision is also in our own Traffic Act. In other words, the Main Roads Department will have the right to set the axle loads of vehicles and under our Traffic Act interstate vehicles have to comply with the speeds laid down for certain roads in the same way as local vehicles.

If anyone were foolish enough to attempt to prevent interstate road transport by the imposition of farcical axle loads—say a 4-ton axle load—or by the restriction of speeds to, say, 10 miles per hour—it would be constituting a prohibition and would lead to another case in which the appellants would be certain to succeed in the same way as in the case recently heard by the Privy Council. That case succeeded because of the imposition of high fees in the Eastern States—namely 3d. per ton per mile surcharge not only upon the load carried but also upon the gross weight of the load plus the vehicle. It constituted a heavy impost and was considered by the Privy Council to be a prohibition, which is not permitted under Section 92 of the constitution.

Hon. D. Brand: It meant over £1,000,000 to New South Wales.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Something over £1,000,000 was collected annually. If one started to work out figures on 3d. a ton per mile on, say, a 20 ton load, plus a 10 ton tare for the vehicle, it would work out to an enormous sum over a distance of 400 or 500 miles. Therefore, large sums were derived from that source, but in comparison, the fees in Western Australia provided only a small impost. As I have said, we propose to give power to prevent unfit persons from driving a vehicle and vehicles that are not roadworthy from being used on our roads. From our point of view the most important provision is that over the years certain fees have been levied and collected for the licensing of interstate vehicles.

In the Bill, provision is made that these fees shall be irrecoverable by the person who paid them. I do not think there is anything unfair in that. After all is said and done, they have been moderate fees and were based on the same scale as those that were paid by our own carriers engaged on interstate work. In addition to that, the money that has been received has been used by road authorities to maintain and provide roads, and these vehicles have had the use of those roads. Therefore, I do not think anyone would cavil at the provision in the Bill that these fees shall be irrecoverable by those who have paid them.

Hon. D. Brand: Are they opposed to the inclusion of this provision in similar legislation to be introduced in New South Wales and Victoria where a large sum of money is involved?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: In this State we are only concerned with the small amount of money that has been received. However, the same principle is to be introduced in similar legislation in other States, but the Transport Board, which has not calculated the amount very closely, considers that £7,000 or £8,000 would be the amount that we would have to refund if we were called upon to do so. However, in the Eastern States they propose to insert the same provision, namely, that the fees paid shall be irrecoverable, but whether that will conform to the laws in other States, is a question that will have to be decided.

Mr. Hutchinson: Do the Crown Law officers consider that this provision will cover the situation?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Yes, they do because they are of the opinion that Parliament is supreme and, in their opinion, no one, on the ground of equity and fairness, could maintain that the State was not entitled to retain these fees. It has to be borne in mind that interstate vehicles contribute nothing towards the maintenance and provision of roads by way of petrol tax. They are all diesel vehicles and the owners of them pay no Customs duty on diesel fuel and consequently all they pay is the vehicle licence fee. They are at a distinct advantage in that regard.

As I said earlier, I do not think there is anything unreasonable about the four principal provisions in the Bill. I think they are fair and equitable. Some people are of the opinion, following on the decision by the Privy Concil, that we had no authority to impose the fees that were collected and consequently we have to protect our position. We also wish to be consistent by saying that we are entitled to collect fees on the vehicles that use our roads from the border to any part within the State in the same way as we levy transport fees upon owners of vehicles who reside within the State. I move—

> That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Court, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.